DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY

Masters Programmes Student Evaluations – 2014-15

Results from the SAMT for 2014-15

The results from the Student Assessment of Modules and Teaching (SAMT) for the Master modules in 2014-15 were positive overall. In these evaluations 5 stands for ‘Strongly Agree’ (the favourable end of the scale and 1 stands for ‘Strongly disagree’ (the negative end). Of the 21 modules taught either in the Autumn or Spring terms, only three had mean average scores below 4.0 (two at 3.9 and one at 3.8). Notable is the fact that the largest module, Sociological Research Design, taken by 39 students, had an average score of 4.5.

Looking at the data by question, the scores on ‘The teaching was well organised, structured and clear’ and ‘The teacher was good at explaining things were above 4.0 for every module, as were the scores for ‘The teacher was approachable and available to provide me with support and guidance’. The lowest scores in the Autumn term were for the question ‘I understood the marking criteria in advance of undertaking my assessment’. However scores on this question for the Spring term modules were considerably better, suggesting we need to do more work on introducing the criteria in the first term (see below).

Student Satisfaction Survey (SSS) for 2014-15

Only 16 PGT students responded to the 2014 SSS so the results needed to be treated with caution (the figure the previous year with a smaller cohort the number responding was only 8). Because of the small size of the groups in both years, comparison with the previous year’s figures is unlikely to be reliable. Instead I look at the scores for the responses to different sections of the questionnaire for 2014-15. In the SSS figures are given for the percentage agreeing and the percentage disagreeing with various statements. The average agreement score for the Teaching sections was 89% - a good figure with the highest score for the question ‘Staff are enthusiastic about what they are teaching’ where the score was 94%. Scores on questions relating to Organisation and management reached 90% agreement, and on Learning Resource reached 88% agreement – again good figures.

Assessment and feedback, where scores across the University have typically not been especially high, the average score was 76% agreeing, with the lowest score for the question ‘The criteria used for marking have been clear in advance’ (63%). This is in line with the SAMT scores (see above). It might be desirable to include these in the outlines for each module. The scores for the three questions relating to personal development which produced the lowest average at 62%, suggesting we need to do more to encourage students to feel confident about their skills and ability (it is however a pity that these questions are asked before the students complete their degree).

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